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## **Sen. Kuipers' legislation to keep sex offenders out of classrooms signed into law**

**LANSING** – Sex offenders would be stopped from working in schools under legislation signed by the governor, Sen. Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, announced today.

“Sex offenders should be kept from classrooms and abusing children,” said Kuipers, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, which took up some of the legislation. “I’m pleased the governor has signed this Republican-backed legislation after News reports showed existing laws aren’t enough.”

Kuipers sponsored Senate Bill 609, which deals with demotion or firing of tenured teachers convicted of sex crimes.

Other parts of the Student Safety Initiative include:

- Requiring background checks on all paid school and day-care center employees and prohibiting anyone with a sex offense from being employed;
- Creating Student Safety Zones by prohibiting convicted sex offenders from living, working or loitering within 1,000 feet of a school;
- Revoking teaching certification for convicted sex offenders; and
- Requiring all school employees to self-report any criminal charge to their school district and to the Department of Education.

The Student Safety Initiative is a bicameral effort that comes on the heels of a series of reports in the Detroit News showing repeated cases of sex offenders being allowed access to children in Michigan schools. At least 35 Michigan school employees, a majority of whom are teachers, have been charged or convicted of sexual misconduct in recent months, according to recent news reports.

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